

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 640

By Finney L

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Milton Ray Coats of Jackson.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Milton Ray Coats; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Coats was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, he served with acumen and alacrity for thirty years in service to the Tennessee Public Service Commission, in which position he earned the respect of his peers and superiors alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, a native of Greenfield, Ray Coats was the son of the late Herbert and Verlie LaFon Coats; and

WHEREAS, he rendered sterling service as a proud member of the United States Navy before embarking his career with the Tennessee Public Service Commission; he retired from the Commission in 1991; and

WHEREAS, a man who never met a stranger and naturally put others at ease, Ray Coats was a beloved member of the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Jackson, where he served for many years as an elder; and

WHEREAS, because of his booming voice and larger-than-life personality, Mr. Coats was nicknamed "Big," a moniker coined by the children at his church; and

WHEREAS, it is no surprise that he earned such favor with the children in his church; Mr. Coats oversaw the church's annual Easter egg hunt for more than forty years, dying and hiding a total of nearly 80,000 eggs over the years; and

WHEREAS, a community leader who was deeply admired by those he met, Ray Coats gave of his time and many talents in membership to the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars; and

WHEREAS, when he was not volunteering at his church or working to better his community, he enjoyed cooking and was an avid hunter and fisherman; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Coats was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Ray Coats enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of forty-four years, Yvette Baker Coats, and was the proud father and father-in-law of Carol Coats and Ron Wyrick, Eric and Katherine Coats, and Ken and Tamarra Coats; and

WHEREAS, he will be sorely missed by his four grandchildren, Jennifer Coats, Blake Wyrick, Sara Beth Coats, and Analeigh Coats; his sister, Barbara Coats Brandenburg; his brother, Whit Coats; and his devoted caregivers, Alta Marshall and Cindy Ferris; and

WHEREAS, Ray Coats leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Milton Ray Coats, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Coats.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.